DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON

THE WINTER VEGETABLE GARDEN.

This pamphlet is intended for the use of teachers who are conducting home-garden work in the schools of the South, and shows how the garden can be made to produce during the winter months.

SOIL REQUIREMENTS.

A mellow, warm, well-drained soil is essential for winter gardening. A clay soil can be made mellow by a liberal dressing of well-rotted manure; by adding sand or fine coal cinders as well as wood ashes or lime; and by deep, thorough tillage. This means plowing or spading and immediately harrowing or raking when the soil is neither too wet nor too dry. It may be tested by squeezing some soil in the hand; if it crumbles it is not too wet. A sandy soil is made mellow by a liberal dressing of well-rotted manure. A soil is made warm not only by the sun's rays but by the decay of organic matter and by drainage, which removes the surplus water and checks the loss of heat used in evaporation. To insure drainage, it is frequently necessary to sow the seeds of the winter vegetables of September and October in beds 5 feet wide, 3 inches high, and extending the length of the garden. These beds are made by sinking a path 18 inches wide every 5 feet and throwing the soil into the beds on each side. The top of the bed can be leveled with the back of a rake. From four to five long rows of vegetables can be planted in each bed.

SCHEDULE OF PLANTING.

The planting of the winter garden commences in June, when salsify and parsnips are sown, either after the spring vegetables are harvested or between the rows of the early summer vegetables. The last of June or the first of July winter cabbage and collards are sown, to be transplanted into rows in August. Carrots may be sown in June and July. Because the seeds are small and slow to germinate, it is advisable to sow carrot and radish seeds in the same row. The radish seeds germinate quickly, and the plants mark the rows, so that hoeing may be commenced early. Turnips, lettuce, endive, rape, kale, spinach, parsley, mustard, and onion sets may be planted any time from August to October.

24159°—16

VARIETIES.

The success of the winter garden depends upon good seeds quite as much as upon mellow soil. For this reason it is recommended that seeds be purchased in bulk from some reliable seedsman, and the seeds be divided into packages containing the quantity needed for the home garden. Small envelopes can be purchased at a reasonable price for this purpose.

Salsify: Mammoth Sandwich Island.
Parsnips: Hollow crown.
Carrots: Half long Danver.
Cabbage: Succession Charleston Wakefield.
Collards: Southern short stem.
Turnips: Purple top, globe, seven top.
Lettuce: Grant White Forcing. Big Boston.
Endive: Green curled, white curled.
Rape: Dwarf Essex.
Kale: Dwarf curled Scotch for August planting. Siberian for September planting.
Spinach: Savoy.
Parsley: Double curled.
Mustard: Giant Southern curled. Ostrich plume.
Onion sets: White Pearl, Silver Skin, Yellow Danver.

TIME OF HARVESTING.

The time of maturity of the winter vegetables depends upon the richness of the soil and climatic conditions. Under the most favorable conditions the dates are as follows:

Parsnips, salsify, and carrots may remain in the ground during winter and be dug as needed.

Cabbage and collards sown in July and transplanted in August will mature in November. Cabbage seeds sown in September and transplanted in November will mature in the spring.

Turnips sown in August mature in November.

Lettuce sown in August is harvested in October. Lettuce sown in September should be transplanted in cold frames in early October and harvested in December and January.

Endive matures more slowly than lettuce. It can be picked any time after the leaves are 4 inches long. The large leaves to be tender should be blanched.

Rape, kale, spinach, parsley, and mustard sown in August should mature in December.

Rape, kale, and spinach sown in September should mature in February.

Onion sets planted in August can be used continuously during the winter. Those planted in September mature in March.

The section of the garden not to be used for winter vegetables should be planted in a green manuring crop—crimson clover, winter oats, rye, hairy vetch, or burr clover. Crimson clover can be planted in late September or October, at the rate of 15 pounds per acre. The other crops are planted in October—winter oats at the rate of 3 bushels to the acre, rye at the rate of 2 bushels to the acre. Hairy vetch should be planted with winter oats or rye at the rate of 30 pounds per acre with 1 bushel of oats or rye. This green covering will make the garden attractive during the winter months as well as add organic matter to the soil when turned under in the early spring.

WASHINGTON : GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1916